

Honoring Ruth E. Ward: Silenced by Isolation and Hospital COVID19 Protocols

My name is Rebekah Hodge-Ward. For years, I was the proud daughter and caregiver for my mother, Ruth E. Ward. Ruth was 80 years old, an all-around beautiful mom, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She was a pillar of our California community, recognized with a California Senate Award and the Golden Apple for her countless years volunteering in local classrooms. She was a woman overflowing with wisdom—wisdom that was cut short.

On December 4, 2020, I took my mother to the emergency room at San Antonio Regional Hospital in Upland, CA, because she had trouble breathing. They rushed her inside. Because of strict lockdown protocols, I was forced to stay behind. I was promised they would call me for her medical history. They never did.

What followed over the next 22 days was a nightmare of isolation, ignored directives, and complete silence. When an infectious disease doctor called me on December 5, she suggested using convalescent plasma. I clearly and firmly said **NO**. Yet, when I finally obtained her 200-page medical chart, the records revealed they gave her two rounds of it anyway, completely ignoring my refusal. They pushed a strict protocol of Remdesivir and over 20 other medications, completely blocking me from having any input or receiving updates from her doctors.

Whenever I called, the updates were vague. I was told she was "agitated," that they had to physically restrain her, and that she wasn't eating. No one ever told me she was failing. On Christmas morning, December 25, 2020, I received the call that she had passed away.

When my son and I were finally allowed into the room they had kept me out of for 22 days, my heart broke. My mother did not look peaceful. Her body was covered in bruises.

The rigid, EUA's death protocols of the COVID19 and ignoring normal Pneumonia protocols did more than just fail medically—they silenced a generation of our senior citizens. They locked families out, ignored the voices of loving caregivers, and took away the vital knowledge and history our elders had left to share with the world. I am speaking out today because Ruth E. Ward deserved better. She deserved her family, she deserved her rights, and she deserved to be heard.

Respectfully ~Rebekah A Hodge-Ward